

PATENTS  
112025-0115**IN THE CLAIMS:**

- 1 1. (Previously presented) A system for use in gathering information for use in managing  
2 a network, said system comprising:  
3 a plurality of network switches logically organized in a stack configuration so as to  
4 operate as a single logical switch, each network switch having a plurality of ports;  
5 an entity separate and remote from the plurality of switches for gathering said infor-  
6 mation;  
7 a multiplexer separate and remote from the plurality of network switches for selec-  
8 tively connecting, according to an arbitration scheme, said plurality of network switches one  
9 at a time to said remote entity, wherein  
10 each network switch is connected to said multiplexer by a separate connection, and  
11 transmits port activity-related data that are supplied to the remote entity via the multiplexer in  
12 accordance with the arbitration scheme, and are converted by the remote entity into network  
13 management-related information.
- 1 2. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said entity comprises a re-  
2 mote monitoring probe.
- 1 3. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said multiplexer comprises  
2 a network hub.

PATENTS  
112025-0115

1 4. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said multiplexer comprises  
2 a network media access unit.

1 5. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said switches are config-  
2 ured to generate control signals for implementing said arbitration scheme.

1 6. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 5, wherein said multiplexer is config-  
2 ured to be controlled by said control signals.

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1 7. (Currently amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein said ~~raw-port activity-~~  
2 related data signals comprises switch port activity information, and said switches are config-  
3 ured to permit user selection of particular switch port activity information to be supplied to  
4 the remote entity via the multiplexer.

1 8. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, further comprising program proc-  
2 esses executed by said switches for carrying out said arbitration scheme.

1 9. (Previously presented) A system for use in gathering network management informa-  
2 tion, said system comprising:

3 a plurality of network switches configured in a stacked configuration, each switch  
4 having a plurality of ports including a probe port for receiving switch activity-related infor-  
5 mation from other ports of the respective switch;

PATENTS  
112025-0115

6 a connection between the probe port of a first network switch to a monitoring probe  
7 that is separate and remote from the plurality of network switches;  
8 means for interconnecting the network switches through their respective probe ports;  
9 and  
10 means for selectively transmitting the switch activity-related information received at  
11 the probe ports of the network switches to the separate and remote monitoring probe, one  
12 network switch at a time, through the probe port of the first network switch, wherein  
13 the separate and remote monitoring probe converts the received switch activity-  
14 related information into network management-related information.

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1 10. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 9, wherein said switches are con-  
2 figured to implement an arbitration scheme for determining the order in which the activity-  
3 related information of each switch is provided to said probe.

1 11. (Previously presented) A system according to claim 9, wherein said probe ports be-  
2 ing solely for transmission of said activity-related information.